

REMARKS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 6, 9, 12, 13, 18, 21, 24 and 27 have been amended.

No new matter is being presented, and approval of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

REASONS FOR ENTRY

Applicants request entry of this Rule 116 Response and Request for Reconsideration because the amendments to claims 1, 6, 9, 12, 13, 18, 21, 24 and 27 are merely to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 and to further improve form and readability. The amendments were not earlier presented because the Applicants believed in good faith that the cited prior art did not disclose the present invention as previously claimed. The amendments do not entail any further search by the Examiner since no new features are being added or no new issues are being raised.

Further, the amendments do not alter the scope of the claims and place the application at least into a better form for appeal. The Manual of Patent Examining Procedures sets forth in §714.12 that "[a]ny amendment that would place the case either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered." (Underlining added for emphasis) Moreover, §714.13 sets forth that "[t]he Proposed Amendment should be given sufficient consideration to determine whether the claims are in condition for allowance and/or whether the issues on appeal are simplified." The Manual of Patent Examining Procedures further articulates that the reason for any non-entry should be explained expressly in the Advisory Action.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

On page 3 of the Action, the Examiner rejects claim 1, stating that the limitation "the part", in line 15, lacks sufficient antecedent basis. Claim 1 is amended herein to maintain antecedent basis. Approval of amended claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Although not rejected by the Examiner, claims 9, 12, 13, 18, 21, 24 and 27 are also amended herein further clarify the features of the present invention and to maintain antecedent basis.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

On pages 3-11 of the Action, the Examiner maintains the rejection of claims 1-30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over previously-cited Okada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,393,461) in view of Bunney et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,446,112).

On page 4 of the Action, referring to claim 1, the Examiner states that Okada does not disclose “a table for storing therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information of persons using said virtual communications spaces” and, thus, Bunney is cited as disclosing this feature.

Applicants believe, however, that the Examiner misunderstood the features recited in independent claim 1. Claim 1 does not merely recite a table storing identifiers and corresponding character-train information of persons using said virtual communications spaces. Instead, claim 1 recites a table storing *identifiers of said virtual communication spaces and corresponding character-train information of the persons*. That is, the present invention, as recited in independent claim 1, provides for use of the different display names, corresponding to the virtual communication space within which a user is chatting.

Bunney, on the other hand, merely teaches a table (Table 6) storing identifiers of users for sending a notification to an e-mail address of the user to notify the arrival of a new e-mail at another corresponding e-mail address, which the user did not use to log on, but also belongs to the user. (See column 9, lines 12-20 and column 10, lines 1-12). Even if, *arguendo*, the e-mail addresses of Bunney are considered to be defined as virtual communication spaces for a chat system, as described in the present application, Table 6 merely allows a message in a virtual communication space of a user to be sent to notify the user of the arrival of a new chat message in another communication space. In the present invention, however, chat messages of a user are displayed with a corresponding display name in a corresponding virtual communication space, and other chat messages are displayed with another corresponding display name in another corresponding virtual communication space.

It is further noted that, in Fig. 5 of Bunney, the chat proxy does not even look up Table 6. Thus, Bunney fails to teach or even suggest applying Table 6 to a chat system.

Thus, Bunney does not provide use of the different display names for a user for respective *corresponding* virtual communication spaces. The Examiner has not mentioned this feature, let alone cited a portion of the prior art disclosing its equivalent.

Furthermore, on page 5 of the Action, the Examiner states that means for determining a character train, among character-train information, to be used as an identifier of the person is inherently implied in a system that used part of said character-train information to be used as an

identifier (citing column 11, lines 1-43, and column 12, lines 8-21).

However, claim 1, for example, recites means for determining a character train, among said character-train information, to be used in a *corresponding* one of said plurality of virtual communication spaces for a designated one of said identifiers of the person. Thus, as stated above, the present invention, as recited in independent claim 1, is characterized in that different display names are used for respective *corresponding* virtual communication spaces.

In the Response to Arguments, on page 2 of the Action, the Examiner recognizes the argument, set forth in the previous Amendment, that Bunney does not provide use of the different display names for a user for respective corresponding virtual communication spaces. In response, the Examiner notes that Bunney teaches messaging between individuals or groups using one-to-one and many-to-many chat groups and the opportunity to use a plurality of identities per person along with associated preferences and interests for each identity (citing column 2, line 66, to column 3, line 16).

However, the cited portion of Bunney makes no mention of any *correspondence* between a user name and a communication space, as explicitly recited in independent claim 1.

The other independent claims recited similar features to independent claim 1, described above, and thus it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 9, 12, 13, 18, 21, 24 and 27 patentably distinguish over the prior art.

The pending dependent claims inherit the patentability of their respective base claims and, thus, it is further submitted that the dependent claims patentably distinguish over the prior art.

REQUEST FOR EXAMINER INTERVIEW

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned, at the convenience of the Examiner, to schedule an interview to discuss the distinguishing features of the present invention.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot. Further, all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: June 26, 2006

By: Michael P. Stanley
Michael P. Stanley
Registration No. 58,523

1201 New York Ave, N.W., 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501